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Vernon, Mrs. H. M. *Italy from 1494 to 1790.* Pp. viii, 516. Price, 5s. 6d.
Cambridge: University Press, 1909.

This book is not up to the high standard of most of the other works in the series to which it belongs. It purports to deal, as its title implies, with the history of Italy from the invasion of Charles VIII of France to the beginning of the Revolutionary era, and the author tells us in her preface that she proposes to lay stress on the period after 1559 "about which it is difficult for the ordinary reader to obtain information." But the implied promise is scarcely fulfilled. Nothing is more needed, for instance, than a clear and scholarly description of the administration of the Spanish dependencies in Italy in the last half of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in a book like this one has a right to expect it. Instead we find in Chapter III a scrappy and often inaccurate collection of data on this topic, which is clearly inferior to the account in Ranke's "Die Osmanen Monarchie und die Spanische" and, by the way, are we to assume that Mrs. Vernon is ignorant of this classic work, or are we expected to recognize it under the title of "History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations from 1494-1514," which appears in the bibliography? Tommaso Campanella is certainly worth more in a work of this scope than the dozen lines allotted to him on page 284. The account of the Papacy and administration of the states of the church would have been enormously improved by a perusal of Herre's "Pabstthum und Pabstwahl im Zeitalter Philipps des Zweiten" of which there is no mention; his "Evropäisch Politik im Cyprischen Krieg," on the other hand, is scarcely sufficiently near to the subject of this work to merit the place it holds in the selected bibliography.

Of actual errors of fact there are few, though minor inconsistencies and infelicities in nomenclature abound; but the work as a whole gives an impression of being patched together, of lack of unity, and of absence of historic background. It will doubtless serve a useful purpose in giving the English-speaking student who is ignorant of continental languages a tolerable hand-book for a period of which he otherwise would have to remain in ignorance, but it cannot for one moment pretend to rank with the standard French, German, or Italian authorities.

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War in the Far East. By a military correspondent of the "Times." Pp. 656.
Price, \$5.00. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

Though this book was written from daily reports sent to the "Times" during the Russo-Japanese war, it remains the best account of the conflict from the Japanese side that has yet appeared. England's ally is consistently upheld, but the partisanship is not an unreasoning one and the author does not hesitate to give praise to Russia and the Russians when it is due. Then, too, there is a certain glow about the reports coming, as they do, direct from

the field of action, which makes much otherwise detailed reading have an absorbing interest.

England and Russia, so the argument runs, are in unalterable antagonism. "The firmest bond that unites England and Japan is the mutual distrust . . . of Russian policy." Japan, England and the United States must stand together for the open door. Japan is the most ardent champion of this principle and is the most sincere protector of China. The war was all important for the island empire. "After all, Russia is fighting for its dinner and Japan for its life."

The war operations are reviewed in detail. Like most writers, the author underestimated what the Russians could accomplish with the Trans-Siberian, and therefore did not foresee the importance the war was to assume even after the disaster to the fleet. "How is the Russian camel to pass through the eye of the Trans-Siberian needle?" Russian unpreparedness is criticised, the Port Arthur experience is held to show that fortresses may quite as often be a source of weakness as of strength.

The battle descriptions are vivid and clear. A wide command of history, especially from its military side, enables the author to draw comparisons with past experiences, especially the Boer and Crimean wars, which will be valuable to the tactician as well as to the historical student. Mr. Percy Fisher's maps of the campaigns are admirable. The author is highly to be congratulated on his success in securing the use of these drawings which make every move in the campaign intelligible. The book closes as it begins with a warning to England. The performance of the Trans-Siberian is held to be the greatest of proofs that Russia could threaten England in India and that the two countries by opposition of interests must remain natural enemies.

Public opinion and international policies have shifted since the war and perhaps if the book were written to-day the viewpoint would be changed. Japan is no longer the most sincere advocate of open-door principles and the treaty of 1907 seems to indicate that the English foreign office does not think an Anglo-Russian *entente* an impossibility. In its presentation of facts and reviews of historical analogies the book is highly to be commended.

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